



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 104th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 141

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 1995

No. 47

House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. SHAYS].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 14, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable CHRISTOPHER SHAYS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 1995, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leader limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] for 5 minutes.

STATE OF AFFAIRS AT GUANTANAMO BAY

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I just returned from a quick visit down to Guantanamo Bay in Cuba to see how the situation was there with the Cubans who are in the detaining camps and see how our military is doing, and I have nothing but accolades to give to our military for the fine job they are doing down there under very difficult circumstances. They are running a city of about 36,000 people in reality and they are doing it with very little material and very little preplanning and

under difficult circumstances when everybody who is there is not necessarily happy to be there in terms of the Cubans who have left.

Cubans had hoped to go to Miami rather than to Guantanamo Bay, but I will say that the Cubans themselves who are in the camps are doing very well. They are well cared for. I spent a good deal of time with Senator BOB GRAHAM from Florida talking directly with them about their problems. The main complaint of course is the paroling process. The immigration process is too slow and it is moving very, very slowly for the children, the elderly, the sick among them, and then the big problem, of course, that it does not provide for some 17,000 to 20,000 Cubans who don't really know where they are going to go because there is no process for them and at the present time they are just living in a camp, a tent camp in Guantanamo without too much hope of what is next.

We talked about the problems that they were having in those camps, the remoteness, the feeling out of touch, the medical attention, the priorities, not enough medicine to go around, not enough doctors' visits, the food. Everybody always complains about food in situations like that, but by and large the Cubans are being very, very well cared for and I think Americans can be proud of that.

Improvements are being made. We are putting in food galleys, putting in air-conditioning in some areas, better recreation areas, better bathrooms, getting away from the port-a-potties, better shelters, sturdier tents with hard roofs. This matters because it is a harsh climate down there. It is an area where the wind often blows hard, the windward passage, and it is subject to hurricanes. In fact, some call it Hurricane Alley in that part of the world.

We have dealt with the water problems, the sewer problems and landfill

problems, and all of this is going on while there is a very intense opposition to Fidel Castro in these camps that has not diminished in any sense at all, and people who think we should negotiate might want to talk to some of these Cubans down there at Guantanamo about the human rights violations, the suffering, the misery, the economic hardship that the Castro government has put them through, even to the point of death and confiscation.

Right now Fidel Castro is in Europe in a self-rehabilitation program promoting himself and what a great guy he is and he has apparently convinced a few people in Copenhagen and is on his way to meet with the President of France and have some type of a photo opportunity to prove to the world that he has not really done all the bad things that these witnesses in Guantanamo are there to attest that he has done.

What is going on in Guantanamo is not without cost. It costs us about \$20 million a month and it doesn't account for all of the costs we are putting in there. Right now, we are using Navy funds, operational and maintenance funds that the Navy needs for steaming, keeping up our readiness, national security, defense, as it were, is being used and we are going to have to restore those funds. When we get through, we are talking about hundreds of millions of dollars for this problem that Fidel Castro has given to the American taxpayer in the way we are handling it today.

There are some very serious problems staring us in the face right now. What is going to be the future of Guantanamo as a base once it is no longer a refugee camp, I don't know, but we are putting a ton of money in the place so we ought to know. But more important than that, what is going to happen when the long hot summer starts and 17,000 to 20,000 Cubans, mostly young

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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